

TO: LESLIE FROST
FR: KATHY FITTS
DT: SEPTEMBER 24, 2024

Dear Leslie:

I am happy to provide the following report on the Sandra Joyce grant that was won by the Haverhill Garden Club:

The Haverhill Garden Club's dream of creating a walkway of trees, shrubs and flowers with edible components has finally launched - at a different location than we originally planned in 2022. Bridge repair stood in the way of our first site, but happily our **Edible Avenue** will now connect a sidewalk near the ballfields at the eastern side of Riverside Park with a state-funded trail constructed along the Merrimack River behind the park and the Rivers Edge shopping plaza. It's already proving to be very popular with walkers.

This fall we are planting 15 trees along the avenue: Eastern redbud, hickory nut, Cornelian cherry, serviceberry, and hazelnut. Come spring 2025, club members will plant 30 shrubs: blueberry, spicebush, wintergreen, beach plum and black chokeberry. We will also install perennial beds featuring daylilies, monarda, gaultheria, and agastache. We are so pleased the avenue features two handicapped-accessible raised beds that were funded in part by a grant from the **Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts**. The beds will be planted in the spring with herbs, strawberries and ferns.

Signs and brochures will teach the community about what parts of the plantings are edible by people, birds, bees and other pollinators. Visitors can learn even more about each tree, shrub or flower by using a QR code tag that will lead to a website maintained by our partner, Team Haverhill.

The raised beds were built by students at Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School at a cost of \$3,424.46. Please let me know if you need a copy of the invoice. We also received a \$3,000 grant from the Haverhill Cultural Council, so, at this point, we have used \$424.46 from the Sandra Joyce grant. We plan to use the remaining \$575 towards (1) a National Park style sign that explains the trees and plants chosen and (2) the metal tags with QR codes.

We are so grateful to the GCFM for this grant!

Kathy Fitts